

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding final Office Action mailed December 31, 2008. Claims 1, 3-7, 11, 15, 18-19, 22, 23, 29, 32, and 33 remain pending in the present application. By this amendment, claims 1, 3, 5, 11, 15, 18-19, 22, 29, 32, and 33 have been amended for clarification, and claims 2, 8-10, 12-14, 16-17, 20-21, 24-28, 30-31, and 34-36 have been canceled without prejudice, waiver of disclaimer. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 22, and 32 may be found, for example, in the canceled claims. In view of these amendments, reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

Examiner Interview Summary

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the courtesy extended by Examiner Thomas Mansfield in the interview with Applicant's representative, Jennifer Pearson Medlin, on March 26, 2009. During the interview, Ms. Medlin proposed amendments to claim 1, including incorporating features formerly recited in claims 2 and 14 among other features. While no agreement was reached as to the allowability of the claims, claim 1 has been amended in an effort to clarify the claimed subject matter in the manner discussed during the interview.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-4, 8-9, 11-12, 14-18, and 33-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2002/0029161 to Brodersen et al. ("Brodersen"). To the extent this rejection has not been rendered moot by the cancellation of claims, it is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate features formerly recited in claims 2 and 8-10, 12-14, and 16-17 among other features. Claim 1, as amended, recites a method of defining and evaluating a set of business rules during runtime of a software application program in a computer system. The method comprises, in part:

(b) defining a state object for the current rule, wherein the state object comprises user data relevant to the current rule;

- (c) defining at least one condition for the current rule, wherein the at least one condition comprises a decision based on data made available to the software application, ***and the at least one condition is a pattern condition, a structured query language (SQL) condition, or a script condition;***
- (d) defining at least one action for the current rule, wherein the at least one action is based on the at least one condition, ***and the at least one action is a pattern action, a structured query language (SQL) action, or a script action;***

...

evaluating the business rule based on the at least one defined condition for the business rules, the at least one defined action for the business rule, and ***the user data in the state object defined for the business rule, including examining the user data in the state object based on at least one of the pattern condition, the SQL condition, and the script condition;*** and

updating or adding new user data to the state object based on the evaluation of the business rule using at least one of the pattern action, the SQL action, and the script action. (Emphasis added)

The Action refers to Brodersen for the features recited in claims 1-4, 8-9, 11-12, 14-18, and 33-34. In particular, the Action refers to paragraphs 42-47, 67 and 83-85 of Brodersen. Paragraphs 42-47 of Brodersen discuss a graphical user interface for inputting and/or retrieving assignment rules. Paragraphs 83-85 of Brodersen discuss an assignment object *to which rules will be applied* but do not discuss ***defining a rule by defining a state object as set forth in amended claim 1.*** On the contrary, this portion of Brodersen clearly indicates that, rather than defining a rule based on a state object, a rule is defined and then applied to an assignment object. Paragraphs 64 through 70 discuss how assignment rules are defined. However, there is nothing in this portion or any other portion of Brodersen that discloses or suggests defining an assignment rule by ***defining a state object for the current rule, wherein the state***

object comprises user data relevant to the current rule as set forth in amended claim 1. For at least this reason, claim 1 is patentable over Brodersen.

Further, Brodersen fails to disclose or suggest evaluating the business rule based on the at least one defined condition for the business rules, the at least one defined action for the business rule, and **the user data in the state object defined for the business rule, including examining the user data in the state object based on at least one of the pattern condition, the SQL condition, and the script condition and updating or adding new user data to the state object based on the evaluation of the business rule using at least one of the pattern action, the SQL action, and the script action** as set forth in amended claim 1. Accordingly, amended claim 1 is further patentable over Brodersen for at least this additional reason.

If the position is maintained that Brodersen discloses all the features of claim 1, Applicant respectfully requests that it be specifically pointed out where in Brodersen there is a basis for this view.

As noted above, claim 1 has been amended to include features formerly recited in claims 10 and 13. In the rejection of these claims, the Office Action admits that the claimed features are not shown by Brodersen but takes Official Notice that the features are well known in the art. In particular, with regard to both claims, the Office Action takes Official Notice that placing customized operations in script is old and well known in the art. The Office Action has not indicated it was well known in the art or offered an explanation as to why it would have been obvious to define at least one condition for the current rule, where the at least one condition is a script condition as set forth in former claim 10 and claim 1 from which claim 10 depended. Also, the Office Action has not indicated that it was well known in the art or offered an explanation as to why it would have been obvious to define at least one action for the current rule, where the at least one action is a script action as set forth in former claim 13 and claim 1 from which claim 13 depended. Applicant respectfully submits that the features of claims 10 and 13 were not well known in the art and requests that if the position is maintained that such features were well known that a reference be cited as support. Alternatively, if the position is taken that such features would have been obvious, Applicant respectfully

requests that an explanation be provided as to why such features would have been obvious.

Claims 3-4, 11, 15, and 18 depend from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons.

In addition, these claims recite further features not disclosed or suggested by Brodersen. For example, claim 11, as amended, recites that the pattern action uses dynamic binding or reflection to update or add new user data to the state object. As discussed during the Examiner Interview, Brodersen does not disclose or suggest this feature. Accordingly, claim 11 is allowable over Brodersen for at least this additional reason.

Claims 2, 8-9, 12, 14, 16-17 and 34 have been canceled, rendering the rejection to these claims moot.

Claim 33 has been amended to depend from claim 32 and is addressed below with regard to the rejection of claim 32

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 5-7, 10, 13, 19-32 and 35-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brodersen. in view of Official Notice. To the extent this rejection has not been rendered moot by the cancellation of claims, it is respectfully traversed.

With regard to claims 5-7, the Office Action takes Official Notice that various features are well known in the art. In particular, with regard to claim 5, the Office Action takes official Notice that generating a data file for information desire to be stored and saving the data file in a computer system is old and well known in the art. With regard to claim 6, the Office Action takes Official Notice hat a data file is old and well known in the art. With regard to claim 7, the Office Action takes Official Notice that XML files are old and well known in the art. Each of claims 5-7 ultimately depended from claim 2 which recited, in part, defining a state object for the current rule, wherein the state object comprises user data relevant to the current rule. The Office Action has not indicated that it was well known in the art or offered an explanation as to why it would have been obvious to generate a data file and save a data file to a database, wherein

the data file is an XML file for a current rule defined as set forth in claims 5-7 and former claim 2. Applicant respectfully submits that the features of claims 5-7 were not well known in the art and requests that if the position is maintained that such features were well known that a reference be cited as support. Alternatively, if the position is taken that such features would have been obvious, Applicant respectfully requests that an explanation be provided as to why such features would have been obvious.

Claim 19 has been amended to depend from claim 1. In the rejection of claim 19, the Office Action takes Official Notice that it was well known in the art to retrieve stored information from a file. However, the Office Action has not indicated that it was well known in the art or offered an explanation as to why it would have been obvious to retrieve a business rule from a file, wherein the rule is defined as set forth in independent claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that the features of claim 19 were not well known in the art and requests that if the position is maintained that such features were well known that a reference be cited as support. Alternatively, if the position is taken that such features would have been obvious, Applicant respectfully requests that an explanation be provided as to why such features would have been obvious.

Claims 22 and 32 have been amended to recite features similar to those recited in claim 1. As explained above, these features are not disclosed or suggested by Brodersen. With regard to these claims, the Office Action takes Official Notice that a data file was old and well known in the art. However, the Office Action has not indicated that it was well known in the art or offered an explanation as to why it would have been obvious to modify Brodersen to include the above-emphasized features of amended claim 1 which are now included in amended claims 22 and 32. For at least the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that the features of amended claims 22 and 32 were not well known in the art and requests that if the position is maintained that such features were well known that a reference be cited as support. Alternatively, if the position is taken that such features would have been obvious, Applicant respectfully requests that an explanation be provided as to why such features would have been obvious.

Claims 23 and 29 and claim 33, as amended, depend from claims 22 and 32, respectively, and are patentable for at least the same reasons.

In addition, these claims recite further features that make them separately patentable. For example, claim 29, as amended, recites features similar to those in amended claim 11 and is further patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 10, 13, 20, 21, 24-28 and 35-36 have been cancelled, rendering the rejections to these claim moot.

CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. In addition, Applicant reserves the right to address any comments made in the Office Action that were not specifically addressed herein. Thus, such comments should not be deemed admitted by the Applicant. If any questions remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (404) 233-7000.

Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment is being submitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.34 by a registered patent practitioner acting in a representative capacity for Applicants.

Respectfully submitted,

/Jennifer Pearson Medlin/
Jennifer Pearson Medlin, Reg. No. 41,385

April 29, 2009

AT&T Legal Dept. - MMM
Attention: Patent Docketing
Room 2A-207
One AT&T Way
Bedminster, NJ 07921

Customer No. **82998**